INTRODUCTION

This edition of the Crash Data Resource Book marks the sixteenth annual report of motor vehicle crashes in Vermont and continues efforts to provide and widely distribute a highway safety resource book as well as historical trends in crashes. Information about the characteristics and dynamics of motor vehicle crashes has proven to be an important element in policy and planning initiatives to make Vermont's highways safer. The latest edition of the Crash Data Resource Book is published on the Governor's Highway Safety Program website at www.VThighwaysafety.com; a companion volume, the DUI Statistical Resource Book, is also published on that site. Readers are encouraged to visit the site and download tables in Adobe Acrobat PDF format. The Adobe Acrobat reader is available free at www.adobe.com,

Vermont's crash reporting system underwent major improvements that are fully reflected in this and recent volumes of the Crash Data Resource Book. A significant increase in the number of police reported crashes is evident as reports jumped from 3,258 in 2001 to 10,063 for 2002 and then further increased to 13,716 in 2003 and 13,793 in 2004 and to 14,252 in 2005. The primary reason for increases of this magnitude was implementation of a the new Uniform Report of a Motor Vehicle Crash form by the Department of Motor Vehicles (2003 was the first full year of utilization of the new crash form), which has effectively made it easier for law enforcement to collect data and file reports. Extensive training was also carried out as part of the implementation and has resulted in more reports of better quality.

Data used for this report are extracted from the Accident Reporting System (ARS) database developed by the Agency of Transportation. The ARS collects data from police crash reports filed with the Department of Motor Vehicles and adds additional elements not previously available from the previous crash database. It is also important to note that data elements in the ARS are designed to be substantially consistent with the Model Minimum Uniform Crash Codes (MMUCC) developed and adopted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) in 1998. During the past year the Traffic Records Committee, a multi-agency advisory group designed to coordinate improvements to Vermont's highway safety information systems, continued to work hard to improve the Uniform Crash Report Form based on the MMUCC elements, ARS structure, and experience in Vermont.

Readers are advised to carefully review tables in this report, especially those presenting trends from previous years. The large increase in crash reports have created corresponding increases in many of the tables and statistics presented in the following pages.

A highlight of the past years has been development of the architecture for an electronic crash form and system to directly capture data from law enforcement agencies throughout the state. Work on building the system began in January 2005 with implementation initiated in mid-2007. This effort promises to facilitate improved, timely and efficient crash reports, therefore enhancing the quality of data presented here. Traffic citation and criminal charging data from the Vermont District Court and Vermont Judicial Bureau continue to be used as in past editions. All fatal and most injury crashes are included in the ARS data; excluded are property damage crashes involving less than $1,000.

Secondary data necessary for compiling the various rates and measures used in this report were obtained from the Department of Motor Vehicles (registration, licensed drivers, and aggregate crash report data), Agency of Transportation (ARS interpretations and classifications, vehicle miles traveled), Vermont Center for Justice Research (motor vehicle offense and citation databases), National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (national statistics) and Department of Health (population statistics).

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